

# 2023

# GRANT GUIDELINES



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## ABOUT THE 2023 GRANT CYCLE

The annual grant cycle helps us stay connected to community, identify new grantee partners and reinforce existing partnerships with organizations whose programs and services align with our grantmaking priorities and strategic plan. Our annual partnerships also help us quickly respond to emerging needs, strategies, and crises as we navigate the pandemic and its ongoing impact on our service region.

### ABOUT THE 2023 GRANT CYCLE

Since 2018, our grantmaking approach has centered on advancing racial equity and health equity in our service region. In the last year, we have been refining and adapting our grantmaking strategies to ensure the alignment of our partnerships with our strategic plan.

Our grant cycles have become more competitive as more organizations learn of our foundation and new organizations and efforts emerge in our region. As a smaller foundation with limited assets, we take stewardship seriously and look to develop and deepen partnerships that advance systemic solutions for our communities' health and well-being.

This year's grant cycle is open to new and returning applicants seeking a one-year grant.

As the first step, all applicants will submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) that answers questions about their organization's approach to advancing health equity and health justice, how they anticipate utilizing grant funds, and the demographics of their leadership and communities they serve.

Our staff will evaluate all LOIs upon receipt and will notify organizations that will move on to submit a full grant application.

The LOI portal will open on January 3, 2023, and LOIs are due on February 15, 2023, 11:59 pm.

The following pages outline what we look for in partners, how we are defining "alignment", and other important details about our 2023 grant cycle.



## WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN PARTNERS

We believe in transparency and recognize the time and resources it takes to apply for a grant. Therefore, it is important for us to be clear about what alignment to our grantmaking framework looks like.

As a community-informed foundation, we focus our general operating support funding towards efforts that center an equitable recovery from the pandemic in our service region. We seek grantee partners that successfully utilize all of the organizational strategies below:

### **INTERSECTIONAL APPROACHES TO ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY**

We recognize that health equity issues are complex. Therefore, we look for partners that approach their work with the understanding of how individuals and communities with intersecting identities across race, class, gender, age, and/or ability may experience the compounding impact of structural inequities in various ways.

Partners must demonstrate how their work ensures that all residents in our region can have equitable, affirmative and inclusive access to leading full, happy, and healthy lives. We seek partners that tailor their programs, services, outreach, and relationship-building in ways that reflect residents' expertise and experience in comprehensive ways.

### **COMMUNITY-LED**

We recognize that community leadership and expertise are necessary to address health and racial inequities, as they are closest to the issues and solutions. Our most aligned partners demonstrate how they actively center communities' wisdom, expertise, and experience in the advising, planning, execution and evaluation of their programmatic work to build power and influence decision-making, strategies, and/or policies.

### **EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL STEWARDSHIP**

We seek partners who use data and internal systems to foster learning and encourage accountability in pursuit of racially equitable outcomes and continuous quality improvement. Partner organizations must also demonstrate that their policies and practices reflect organizational and fiscal health.

### **SYSTEMS CHANGE**

We seek partners with a strong understanding of how existing systems function to create and maintain current inequities. We recognize that systems change takes time and that no single organization or strategy can erase the impact of long-standing structural inequities. Our most aligned partners articulate how their work fits within broader efforts to address structural issues.



## OUR GRANTMAKING PRIORITIES

All partner organizations must demonstrate that their proposed work aligns with the categories below and has a meaningful footprint in our region or with a core population in our region.

*Potential partners working in this space must be able to demonstrate:*

### **ACCESS** to quality health services

High-quality, comprehensive healthcare services are often out of reach for community members in our region due to systemic racism, high medical costs and/or lack of culturally affirming care.

Investment and innovation to remove physical, financial, and/or cultural barriers to care while also highlighting and engaging in upstream solutions.

### **ADDRESS** social determinants of health

The unfair and avoidable difference in health status means that where people are born, work, live, and age are stronger drivers of health outcomes than individual lifestyle choices and clinical care.

Proven ability to improve community health by addressing structural and social determinants of health in racially equitable ways.

### **ADVOCATE** for health policies & systems change

Policy change can address the root causes of health inequities and impact existing structures that perpetuate racism.

Proven ability to meaningfully center and cultivate the leadership, expertise, and solutions of communities and individuals most impacted by the inequities they seek to address. Organizations must demonstrate deep and active partnerships in our service region.

### **AUGMENT** local health knowledge

Supporting strategies that facilitate access to relevant and usable local health data for communities and partners can enhance their capacity to make informed health-related decisions and advocate for better policies.

Intentional partnerships that ensure local and public health data reflect and can be utilized by communities. This includes facilitation and direct support of community-led inquiry, data collection, and outcomes reporting.

# GRANTMAKING



## GRANT ELIGIBILITY

501(c)3 nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply for general operating support grants. Organizations that are not tax-exempt may apply with a fiscal sponsor.

### POINTS TO CONSIDER

- Organizations are invited to apply for up to 10% of their operating budget (using current fiscal year expenses as a guide). Please note that more compelling and more competitive proposals will request an amount that aligns with a regional health focus and programmatic rationale rather than a straight 10% budget request.
- At least 20% of total individuals served by the applying organization must live in our service region. Organizations whose work extends beyond our service area will be considered if they demonstrate strong alignment with our grantmaking strategy and implement their work in close partnership with local communities.
- For organizations with operating budgets greater than \$20 million—including but not limited to hospitals and university systems—we will only award Project Support grants for initiatives that demonstrate strategic partnership and a strong commitment to local communities in our region.

*Please refer to the FAQs on our website under section "General Operating Support vs. Project Support: Repeats From Larger Institutions" for more information.*

### WHAT WE DO NOT FUND FOR GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

- Businesses
- Capital campaigns\*
- [Conferences and One-Day Workshops](#)
- Government Entities
- Individuals
- National organizations not focused on our service region
- Operating foundations not directly connected to community-based efforts
- Partisan political activities
- Religious activities
- Scholarships
- School Districts & Individual Schools (including parent-teacher associations, charter schools and nonprofits with more than 80% of expenses for school-based operations)

*\*Only capital expenses for materials will be considered for funding (i.e., medical equipment, dental chairs).*

# GRANT APPLICATION



## PROCESS & IMPORTANT DATES

We know it takes time and resources to apply for a grant. Because of this, we consistently evaluate our grant processes to ensure they are as equitable and streamlined to focus on what matters most—improving our region’s health and well-being.

This year's grant cycle is open to new and returning applicants seeking a one-year grant.

As the first step, all applicants will submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) that answers questions about their organization's approach to advancing health equity and health justice, how they anticipate utilizing grant funds, and the demographics of their leadership and communities they serve.

Our staff will evaluate all LOIs upon receipt and notify organizations that will move on to Stage 2, which consists of submitting a full grant application. Upon review and approval, eligible organizations will receive a notice to set up a site visit with a member of our Program team. Please note that not all organizations will move to Stage 3.

See below for important dates and information regarding this year’s three-stage application process.

### ALL APPLICANTS:

### BY INVITE ONLY:

1. LETTER OF INTENT	2. FULL GRANT APPLICATION	3. SITE VISIT
LOI Portal Opens January 3, 2023  <a href="#"><u>LINK TO LOI PORTAL</u></a>  LOI Due February 15, 2023, 11:59PM  Stage 1 Decisions March 1, 2023	Full App Portal Opens March 1, 2023  Full App Due April 14, 2023, 11:59PM  Stage 2 Decisions May 5, 2023	Site visits will be conducted between May and June 2023.

*Grant decisions and notifications will be released in September 2023.*



## MORE INFORMATION FOR YOU

### LOI PROCESS GUIDE

You can review [this helpful resource](#) that walks through the questions you will see as you prepare and submit your LOI via our grants portal.

### QUICK TIPS WHEN USING OUR GRANTS PORTAL

- New applicants must create an organizational profile before applying.
- Returning applicants can update their organizational profile and contact information, if needed.
- We ask applicants to maintain only one account per organization. [Please contact us if you experience a staff transition and need assistance accessing your account.](#)
- Please click “Forgot My Password” on the grants portal homepage if you need a new password.
- If you experience technical issues or have questions about the grants portal, please email us at [administration@hcfdn.org](mailto:administration@hcfdn.org) or call us at (708) 443-5674. If you send an email, please allow 1-2 business days for a response.

### QUESTIONS RELATED TO YOUR APPLICATION

If you have questions about the alignment of your proposal with our grantmaking framework or have questions about our guidelines, [please submit your question here](#).

### OTHER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We want to ensure you have what you need to complete your grant application. We encourage you to access the FAQs section on the ["Apply for a 2023 Grant"](#) page on our website to help answer any questions you may have.

# WHO WE ARE



## BEING IN RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTNERS & OUR SERVICE REGION



*Des Plaines River near Riverside, Illinois  
Photo Credit: Tina Ramirez Moon*

As stewards of community resources within a specific geographic area, we honor our role by committing to being in right relationship with this land and to the peoples and communities that reside here—past, present, and future. We seek to understand how individual and community health is rooted in place by recognizing how indigenous peoples and those who experience migration and displacement can have a profound sense of loss of land, language, relationships, food, and culture foundational to health and wellness.

We acknowledge ourselves as settlers—uninvited guests —on the unceded lands of the people of the Council of Three Fires—the Odawa, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi—as well as other Native tribes who made their home here. Our main office is steps away from the Des Plaines River, a hub of travel, trade, gathering, and healing.

We often refer to our partners and communities as our local health ecosystem because we recognize our work is interdependent and interconnected with the health of all individuals, organizations, systems, and institutions. What impacts one part affects another. To borrow from the indigenous wisdom of reciprocity and mutuality: Each piece is as critical as the whole.

Our region includes Black, Latinx, Middle Eastern/North African, and Asian communities that continue to be disproportionately affected by new COVID variants and post-pandemic conditions whose long-term impact we do not yet fully understand. Many community members in our region also live at the intersection of various identities, such as gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, visible and invisible disability, and immigration status. These identities can deepen how structural inequities and the COVID pandemic harm individuals and communities. Community members and our partners are also experiencing economic challenges and will feel its effects in 2023 and beyond.

Yet, our region continues to be incredibly resilient. Collectively, we remain committed to supporting efforts to rebuild and recover so that all residents can thrive in health and wellness. We are honored to continue being a trusted partner in our communities toward reimagining a just and equitable future for all.

# WHO WE ARE



## ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

### MISSION

We are a community-informed grantmaking foundation that seeks to measurably improve the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities in our service region by promoting health equity, quality and access.

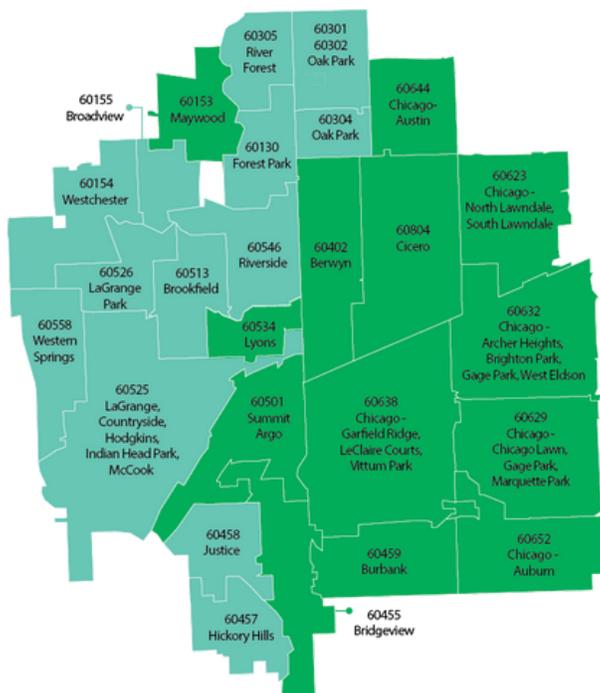
### VISION

We support organizations and efforts working to eliminate health and wellness barriers so all in our service region can lead full, healthy and happy lives, regardless of who they are and where they live.

### OUR SERVICE REGION

As a health conversion foundation, we fund a geographic region defined by the original service area of MacNeal Hospital, whose sale in 1999 established our endowment. Our funding region covers a five-mile radius around the hospital, comprising 27 zip codes where more than 900,000 community members in Chicago and western Cook County suburbs call home. It is an area with diverse and evolving populations, health opportunities and health outcomes.

During our strategic planning process in 2017, we delved deep into detailed, hyperlocal health data in and around the MacNeal Hospital service area, which revealed a clear correlation between racial inequities and longstanding health outcomes. This insight fueled our renewed mission as a foundation and prioritized our grantmaking to zip codes that have experienced the greatest health inequities (our “Equity” area in green) around the hospital’s original service area.



### OUR COMMITMENT TO RACIAL & ETHNIC EQUITY

All community members of our service region should have access to resources and opportunities that improve their health and well-being. The compounding impact of structural racism and other systemic conditions over decades impede these goals and disproportionately affect BILPOC (Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and/or other People of Color) communities. These communities have long experienced worse health outcomes, decreased life expectancy, and less access to health coverage and resources that contribute to a sustainable quality of life.

We seek to achieve health equity by advancing by identifying and eliminating the root causes of structural racism upheld by existing structures and systems. This drives our mission to support organizations and efforts focused on hyperlocal needs and systemic solutions that improve the quality of life for those who experience the greatest health inequities in our service region.

Visit the ["Our Terminology" page](#) on our website to see a list of key terms and definitions that are relevant to our work and grantmaking strategy.